

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 4023

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PLO, TS, KU

SUBJ: STABILITY OF PALESTINIAN POPULATION IN KUWAIT

1. DURING COURTESY CALL ON TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR RIDHA BAOUAB AUG 23, AMBASSADOR TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO SEEK VIEWS OF HIS TUNISIAN COLLEAGUE ON QUESTION OF STABILITY OF PALESTINIAN POPULATION IN KUWAIT.

2. BAOUAB, WHO HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO KUWAIT FOR NEARLY TWO YEARS AND WHO IS GENERALLY REGARDED AS ONE OF THE BETTER INFORMED/ CONNECTED ARAB DIPLOMATS, SEES INSTABILITY IN KUWAIT RESULTING FROM PALESTINIAN ACTION UNLIKELY. HE MAINTAINED THAT KUWAIT ACTS AS BASE FOR PALESTINIANS AND PLO OPERATIONS IN MANY WAYS. IN FIRST INSTANCE, FAMILIES OF MANY PLO LEADERS (INCLUDING ARAFAT AND KHALID AL-HASSAN) AND ACTIVISTS ARE LOCATED HERE. KUWAIT IS ONE PLACE WHERE PALESTINIANS CAN LIVE RELATIVELY PEACEFUL LIVES, CONTINUING THEIR BUSINESS OPERATIONS, EDUCATING THEIR CHILDREN AND EVEN PLAYING AN OFFICIAL ROLE AS RESULT OF THEIR OCCUPYING MANY MIDDLE LEVEL GOVERNMENT JOBS. MOREOVER, PLO DEPENDS TO CONSIDERABLE EXTENT ON FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY KUWAIT GOVERNMENT AND BY PROSPEROUS PALESTINIAN POPULATION HERE.

3. ON THE POLITICAL SIDE, PALESTINIANS HAVE NO REAL QUARREL WITH POSITIONS TAKEN BY GOK SINCE LATTER IS VERY SENSITIVE TO
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PALESTINIAN PROBLEMS AND VERY CAREFUL NOT PUBLICLY TO OPPOSE

PLO POLICIES, EVEN THOUGH GOK LEADERSHIP MAY NOT FULLY SHARE SOME OF PALESTINIAN VIEWS. MASS OF KUWAITI PEOPLE ARE ALSO SYMPATHETIC TO PALESTINIAN CAUSE, SO THAT PALESTINIANS FIND BOTH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CLIMATE IN KUWAIT COMFORTABLE.

4. BAOUAB FELT THAT ONLY POSSIBILITY FOR UPSET OF THIS STABLE COEXISTENCE BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND KUWAITIS COULD RESULT FROM INTRA-PALESTINIAN SQUABBLES, WHICH MIGHT EMERGE AS RESULT OF PALESTINIAN SETBACKS IN LEBANON. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, RADICAL PALESTINIAN ACTIVITY HAS BEEN VERY LIMITED HERE. GOK HAS BEEN VERY FIRM IN INSISTING THAT PLO IS ONLY OFFICIAL ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND IN PREVENTING ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICES BY RADICAL PALESTINIAN SPLINTER GROUPS.
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